

The Give & The Get

To many, especially those who have thought about it only in a fleeting sense, the word "Alumni" merely conjures up images of a homecoming party where everyone does their best to cover unsightly bald spots and magnify brief (and sometimes, spurious) moments in the limelight. Wouldn't it be interesting, maybe even fun, to get together with the old classmates, catch up on all the gossip and, possibly, tap into that reckless party spirit that seems to have slipped away?

To others, the word "Alumni" spells "potential business opportunities"; the perfect medium to establish a common bond for sales purposes.

And, to yet others, the word "Alumni" might trip off warning signals that they are about to be approached by one more hand looking for their hard-earned cash or, worse yet, their precious spare time.

All of these people are looking through a very small keyhole into what is, figuratively speaking, a very large clubhouse.

Yes, an alumni association does have its social aspects, and certainly an inherent element of nostalgia. It is an excellent means through which to establish and maintain valuable business and social contacts. And, like any other association, your Alumni may, from time to time, ask for a donation of either time or money or some combination thereof. But, to hang your considerations toward our fledgling Alumni Association on any one of the above "nails" would be to perpetrate an injustice on both the Association and yourself. Alumni involvement incorporates a truth from all of those statements, but offers a potential depth that goes far beyond even a multiplication of their sum totals.

We, the graduates of Mohawk College, the "Alumni", have been fortunate enough to have had the opportunity of using that institution toward the fulfillment of our own goals. Whether we have taken full advantage of that opportunity or not is insignificant to the debt we now owe.

This new, blossoming, Alumni Association provides us with a channel through which to put something back whence we have taken it. And, there is much to be gained, in both a philosophical and material sense, by doing so.

Involvement in the Alumni Association affords us the opportunities both to serve our Alma Mater and to continue to benefit from it.

Don't get turned off by all the nobility seeping through the fibre of this commentary. Don't be frightened by what seems to be a plea for total commitment.

There is, you see, an inherent feature of our Alumni body with the potential to render Alumni service to the Institution highly effective and, yet, almost painless to each individual Alumni member. That feature is, in fact, the present and ever-increasing extent of our ranks.

There are a lot of us, and therefore, it takes very little from each of us to provide service of considerable significance.

Let's take, for example, the new Student Centre discussed elsewhere in this publication.

Few of us, in retrospect, hardly felt the \$10 we contributed each year to the Development Fund. In perspective, it was just what we probably said it was at the time — one less case of "brew". No big deal. But, all of those seemingly insignificant \$10 contributions now represent a solid foundation for a \$4 million Student Centre; of which, by the way, you are a part. All things considered, those foregone cases of "brew" were a good and certainly painless investment.

Last September, a group comprised mostly of Alumni, under the chairmanship of Karen Lavell of the College's Department of Athletics, put many hours into the research and compilation of recommended "programs and services" designed to initiate a "two-way

flow of services between the College and its Alumni".

The goal of the Programs and Services Subcommittee was to devise a series of low and no-cost activities and services which will achieve the central purpose of the Association yet are in line with the current level of funding and support staff.

The proposed series of offerings was conceived to provide a variety of interesting activities, programs and services for graduates, while ensuring that the College will benefit in many tangible ways from renewed Alumni involvement in College life.

The programs and services included in the proposal are based on the premise that direct costs of participation to the Alumnus should initially be kept to a minimum.

The recommendations which follow have been referred to the Interim Board of Directors of the Alumni Association which will select the programs and services from it that are to be offered during the upcoming year.

Services to the College (The Give)

The Association will provide the following services to the College:

- Assist with the selection of appropriate Alumni for Advisory Committees.

- In co-operation with the Counselling and Career Development Department, establish a Student/Alumni counselling service.

- Assist with Co-operative Education and permanent job placement efforts.

- Provide mailing service to help College departments contact their graduates.

- Assist with Mohawk Foundation fund-raising efforts.

- Assist with the organization of class reunions and homecomings.



Dennis Gower (centre), Association Executive Vice-Chairman, congratulating **Andre Kosokowski** (left) and **Don Pullen**, 1984 Alumni Scholarship Award winners —

(The Give)